

CITY OF CLEMSON

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

APRIL, 2008

CITY OF CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

2008

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City of Clemson, South Carolina (hereinafter referred to as the “City”), in partial fulfillment of the requirements for submission of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application, establishes the following Citizen Participation Plan (CP Plan). This plan describes the process the City will follow to involve the public in the CDBG program. The CDBG program provides funds to units of general local government on a competitive basis. The funds must be used for improving economic opportunities and meeting community revitalization needs, particularly for persons of low and moderate income. The regulations give ultimate responsibility for the design and implementation of the program to local elected officials but also require citizens be given an opportunity to participate by reviewing and making comments prior to the submission of the application to the South Carolina Department of Commerce, Office of Grants Administration.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The City will undertake the following public information efforts to promote citizen participation:

1. The city will make its written CP Plan available for public review by publishing a Notice of Availability in the non-legal section of the Daily Journal Messenger stating the plan will be available for review at the Clemson City Hall located at 1250-1 Tiger Boulevard, Clemson, SC 29631. The CP Plan will also be made available for public consumption at the city’s web site at www.cityofclemson.org.
2. All Notices of Public Hearings will be published in the Daily Journal Messenger, or other newspaper of local publication and circulation at least seven (7) days prior to any scheduled public meeting. The notice will indicate the date, time, location and topics to be considered.
3. All public meetings concerning the CDBG grant will be held no earlier than 6:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, at either the City of Clemson Council Chambers, or other public facility or church located within the proposed target area. Assistance will be provided to accommodate the special needs of disabled persons at their request. The City will advertise advance notice of special needs is required to make these accommodations.
4. The City will make every effort to encourage the participation of residents of the CDBG target area by requesting community leaders of the target area make

announcements by distributing notices of upcoming public hearings to their constituents.

5. A Needs Assessment Public Hearing will be held to discuss and receive feedback on housing and community development needs. The public hearing will be held no earlier than 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the City of Clemson Council Chambers. Notice of this meeting will be published in the Daily Journal Messenger at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The notice will indicate the date, time, location and topics to be covered.
6. Results of the Community Needs Assessment will be presented at a public hearing. Citizen comments from this meeting will be considered in project development. City staff will present the following CDBG program information at this meeting: The amount of CDBG funds available; State funding guidelines; and the range of activities that may be undertaken with such funds.
7. The City will develop a CDBG application for one of the highest, eligible, priority community needs identified in the needs assessment.
8. Technical assistance is available from the City's Office of Community Development to assist group(s) representatives of persons of low and moderate income who request such assistance in developing proposals for community development funding. The city will provide information such as State CDBG guidelines, explanation of survey information required, informational handouts, research of specific issues, staff or local expert presentations and requirements for public participation, etc. The City will consider any proposal developed by representatives of low to moderate income persons, which follow all the requirements for public participation. However, the decision to submit the proposal to the State for funding is the prerogative of and requires the approval of the City Council.
9. There are no significant concentrations of non-English speaking resident's within the community as determined by the 2000 census. The census reports less than 10% of all Clemson residents speak a language other than English in their households. If 5% or more of the potential or actual beneficiaries of a CDBG project are determined to be non-English speaking, provisions will be made at the appropriate public hearings for translation of comments and documents into the native language of the majority of non-English speaking residents affected.
10. After the development of an application for a CDBG grant and prior to submission of the grant application, a public hearing will be held to review and solicit public comment on the proposed activities and to furnish citizens with information on the following: the amount of CDBG funds to be available; the range of activities that may be undertaken; the amount of funds to benefit low and moderate income persons; the proposed activities which are likely to result in displacement; and the local government's anti-displacement and relocation plans.

This hearing will be conducted according to the CP Plan and held at least seven (7) days following the needs assessment public hearing, but should not be advertised until after the needs assessment public hearing has been held.

11. Prior to making any substantial change in the scope of the CDBG funded project, the locality will hold one or more public hearings to inform its citizens, particularly those who might be affected, of the proposed change and solicit public comment.
12. Citizens will be invited to submit comments on all aspects of program performance throughout the program year. Complaints should be submitted, in writing or in any format chosen by the complainant, to The Assistant City Administrator at 1250-1 Tiger Boulevard, Clemson, SC 29631. The Assistant City Administrator will respond in the same format chosen by the complainant within 15 working days. If the response is unsatisfactory, the complainant should submit in writing or in any format chosen, directly to the Mayor at the same address. The Mayor shall respond within 15 working days.

Prior to any response to a grievance which involves State law or policy, State CDBG program guidelines, or federal regulations governing the CDBG program, the city will provide the written grievance and its proposed response to Grants Administration for review and approval of the response.

Appeals to any written grievance will be handled by Grants Administration; however, Grants Administration will deny those appeals which involve the consistent application of the community's local program policies. After the appeal process has been exhausted, the complainant may seek relief in the appropriate court of law.

13. After all proposed activities are complete, but prior to the actual closing out of the grant by the Office of Grants Administration, at least one public hearing will be held to review program performance and accomplishments.
14. Citizens will be provided access to records concerning any project undertaken with CDBG funds, with the exception of confidential material such as personal business financial statements, earnings or sources of income information. Included for public review will be copies of the Pre-Application and Application, Environmental Review Record, and the CP Plan. Other program documents will also be available for citizen review upon request at the Clemson City Hall consistent with applicable State and local laws regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality.